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Falsity in an epitaph, be it never so absurd, is readily pardoned if dictated by affection. Few have the heart to speak or write harshly of the immediate dead, and eulogy over the newly occupied grave is an act of grace becoming one destined soon to be a fellow-dweller.* Seldom, however, do funeral orations find an echo; generally they fall like "earth to earth," and are buried with the object of their sorrowful adulation. Not so the words of Mr T. E. Lloyd and Mr D. Davies at the Llandysul Eisteddfod, on the death of Mynyddog, quoted in your sympathetic article in a late number of the *Musical World*. The respectful sorrow uttered by those gentlemen finds response in the hearts of all Welshmen not bigots; for the missed and lamented one, cut down in his prime, was perhaps the best known and most popular man in the Principality. Your English readers may ask "Who is this great man that has fallen?" He was neither great nor anyway noble, but a simple yeoman who secured the affection of his countrymen. Mr Richard Davies, better known by his bardic name, Mynyddog, was a farmer at Cemmes, Montgomeryshire, who quitted his plough for the more attractive, if not more remunerative, occupation of public entertainer and singer. It was not until he had reached middle life that his talents were discovered, when at a bound he became chief Eisteddfod conductor, and the most notable song writer and vocalist of his class. Possessing a commanding stature, a cool brain, ready tongue, and powerful voice, he moved and spoke on the platform as one having authority; and to Englishmen, perplexed by Celtic phrensy and strange crazes, he appeared the unraveller of mysteries. Retaining the quiet traits of the yeoman, and never assuming the swaggering dignity of the *professional*, he travelled from town to village, from one end of the country to the other, and was everywhere received, by high and low, more as a friend than as a rhyming songster. His popularity was scarcely caused by the quality of his voice, which was twangy and less melodious than many; nor by his piano playing, which was of the "tum-tum" order; neither were his tunes above commonplace; nor was his poetry of an elevated character. But he had wit that was electric; a wit that could set a thousand stolid faces into grinning motion, kindle in each eye a sympathetic spark, and call forth from tired throats redoubled peals of laughter. It was wit that knew no bitterness and scorned the aid of coarseness; wit inclined to virtue, that knew not scoffing; wit that invested common objects with a fresh interest, and never turned goodness into contempt; wit that saw the comic side of things, without vice, spleen, or spite; wit, in his native language, like flint to steel—which cannot meet without a flash.

Mynyddog fed the Welsh folk with jokes. The Celt hungers for amusement as much as the Saxon. The latter has, perhaps, the more robust appetite, and it is certain has more to gratify it. The Welshman has no theatre; the drama has never taken root in the Principality. Mimic life has been allotted to the cities of the plains. But amusement of some sort must be got, to season the insipid food of everyday life, and at times will be sought for, though death and retribution stand in the way. To those, called Fortune's favourites, who make pleasure the business of their lives, the Welshman's amusements seem poor and mean. Still they are enjoyed with a surprising zest. Mynyddog's conceits were invariably relished. The Welsh miner, after long hours' imprisonment in the dark bowels of the earth, if Mynyddog was announced to appear in the neighbourhood, would pass the alehouse, hurry to his home, dress himself in his best, and trudge, with his Ruth, through rough roads and rougher weather, to partake of and join in the harmless mirth. The tiller of the soil and tender of the flocks would gladly quit the glories of the field and grandeur of the mountain when Mynyddog sang of things other than the silent stars and misty hill-tops. And a dweller in the dull town would welcome him—for he was comedian, singer, and punster in one; maker and utterer of homely ditties and tuneful jokes, well nigh sole entertainer in the Welsh tongue.

Mynyddog's loss will be felt most at Eisteddfods, where he was not only a singer of comic ditties, but conductor of the meetings, a post entailing important duties, which have no equivalent in English assemblies. Perhaps the office nearest to it in character

is that of toastmaster to civic feasts. But in Eisteddfodau, chairman, speakers, and secretaries are for the moment really subservient to the conductor. Mynyddog had not the fervid eloquence of Talhaiarn, his predecessor, nor the poetic ability of other bards, his contemporaries; neither had he the education and social position of some of his brother officials; but he had more tact than all of them put together. His humour never deserted him. Lear's Fool uttered no plainer speech to "Nuncle" than Mynyddog the jester to that many-headed majesty—"Eisteddfod." No object, no incident, escaped him. For the prize winners he had a "quid" of compliment; for losers a "pro quo" of encouragement. If the meeting, like a jaded horse, flagged, his wit whipped it into good-humoured activity. Differences, rows, and quarrels will occur occasionally at these meetings; in fact, they are natural to them; but a song or jest from him was often sufficient to cool down the hot blood, and restore order and good fellowship. Mynyddog has left no son to perpetuate his name, nor any work, poetical or musical, to make his fame perennial. Like an exhausted melody he has passed away, leaving traces only to be soon effaced. But mountain winds will chant his dirge, whilst ever and anon his name shall conjure up tender memories to the fleeting generation of Welshmen. FENCERDD GWFFYN.

A Canard about a Duck.

An occurrence not devoid of piquant interest is announced from Vienna. It relates to last season. The celebrated Italian-French-Spanish-American singer (Mad. Adelina Patti) was, in the Austrian capital, greatly admired and greatly run after, as she always is. Even the mighty of the earth paid her some little homage, and thus it happened that she was among those invited to an evening party given by Baron Rothschild. Of course, not "without an object," like the other guests, but to delight the latter by her singing. On such an occasion it is customary for those who indulge in the luxury of serving up, among other delicacies for the benefit of their friends, a few songs from the throat of a famous vocalist, to pay her a fixed honorarium, frequently settled beforehand. On the evening in question Mad. Patti enchanted all present, including the Princess Pauline Metternich. When the fair artist had concluded her pieces, the Princess went up to her, and, mentioning a favourite song, begged her in the most friendly manner to sing it. Mad. Patti consented, but whispered a few words to Rothschild's Secretary, who was standing near her. The Secretary immediately reported the words to the Baron. They were to the effect that "she could, of course, sing the song only on the same terms as the other pieces." The Lady had—oh! Idealism, hide thy weeping face!—fixed her honorarium at so much "per song," and she desired to be paid at the same rate for the song the Princess wished to hear. It is superfluous to say that the original honorarium was something unusually large. Baron Rothschild hastened to communicate Mad. Patti's message to the Princess Metternich, begging her, under the circumstances, to forego the song, and promising, in return, to place eight thousand florins* at the disposal of the Princess for her poor pensioners. The Princess immediately renounced her expected treat. Among those to whose ears the proceeding of the artist found its way was the Empress Elizabeth, who, in consequence, ordered that the name of Mad. Adelina Patti should be erased from the list of vocalists at the next Court Concert, and that of Mad. Ethelka Gerster substituted for it.—*Berlin Echo*.

[How very amusing this would be, were it not a—a—a—Canard!—A. S. S.]

FRANKFORT.—Weber's *Abu Hassan* has been revived at the Stadt-theater after a lapse of many years. *Abu Hassan* was composed in 1811, at Darmstadt, and Weber dedicated it to the Grand Duke of Hesse. The opera was first performed at Mûnich, June 4th in the same year, and subsequently at Frankfort, Stuttgart, Berlin, and Vienna. Translated into Danish, it was given at Copenhagen, and in an English version at Drury Lane (1825). Weber improved the work, touched up the orchestration, and composed the air for Fatima, which is now one of the most striking pieces. *Abu Hassan* was in its time considered a master work; but *Der Freyschütz*, *Preciosa*, *Euryanthe*, and *Oberon* somewhat disturbed that belief, and a revival at the present time is not a sure speculation.

LEIPSIC.—Herr Franz Nachbaur, of Munich, opened a starring engagement at the Stadttheater as George Brown in Boieldieu's *Dame Blanche*. His second character was Masaniello.

* Consult Thackeray.—D. P.

* Why not 10,000?—A. S. S.

GERTRUDE ELIZABETH MARA.

Pictures from the Life of the first German Operatic Singer.

By W. LACKOWITZ.*

II.

(Continued from page 552.)

We must enter the abode of the bitterest poverty, if we would become acquainted with the early history of the most eminent German female singer of the last century—Gertrude Elizabeth Mara; an abode deficient in even the most necessary conveniences of everyday life. The fact is, poor Schmähling, musician, and teacher of music at Cassel, scarcely earned sufficient to enable his wife and himself to drag on a wretched existence. When, however, after many years of a joyless union, and just as he was turning the half century of his life, a daughter was born to him, and the little creature's mother soon afterwards died, his condition would have been much more desperate than it was before but for the fact that it could not be so. The child was sickly from her infancy. Her rickety limbs had not strength enough for her to walk or stand. There she sat, poor little thing, from morning to night, bound fast in her chair, and confided to the care of an old servant when Schmähling went out to give lessons. Her field of view was bounded by invalid fiddles, which had been sent to the musician to mend, and which lay or hung all about the small room. Of God's beautiful world outside little Gertrude had never seen aught; her entire range of thought was encompassed by musical ruins. One day, when her father came home, he heard the sounds of a fiddle in his room. He listened in astonishment. Who could have come during his absence? It was evident that someone was waiting for him, and whiling away the weary hours by playing the fiddle. It was a scale, almost perfectly in tune, which he heard repeated again and again. He opened the door. Who can paint his astonishment! The performer was little Gertrude, the poor sick child. When her father stood before her, so unexpectedly, she nearly let the violin fall from fright. It had been so near her chair that she had been able to reach it. The talent slumbering within her had sought and found an outlet in her imperfect performance. But no word of reproof passed her father's lips; his astonishment was joyous astonishment. Had there arisen a solace for his old age, a source of assistance in his need? He felt a presentiment of the divine spark in his child, and, to her indescribable delight, she now had regular instruction. The result exceeded all expectations; her progress was surprising. News of the miracle presented by the little weakling soon flew, as a matter of course, beyond the limits of the sorry room. The story seemed incredible. The poverty of his domestic arrangements prevented Herr Schmähling, however, from inviting to his own dwelling the unbelievers who would fain have convinced themselves by their own senses of the truth. So, as the mountain could not go to Mahomet, Mahomet was obliged to go to the mountain. Then commenced in Cassel the wonderful peregrinations, about which the subsequently so celebrated lady used herself to speak when a matron; for her memory had faithfully preserved them. Her father went first with the violin-case, followed by the old servant with the child-prodigy, seated in her little chair and carefully wrapt up in shawls. Thus did the strange procession wend its way to the worthy tailors and glovers who were old Schmähling's good friends. In time, the doors of the more well-to-do, also, were flung open. People overlooked the father's utter want of culture, nay, roughness, and were lost in wonder at the weak child, who handled the bow so energetically. Richer presents than the father had ever been able to make her flew into the family coffers. It was at one of the above visits that a rich Frankfort merchant heard the child, and offered to take her—of course, not without her father—with him, and have her talent further cultivated. Schmähling, we need scarcely say, accepted the offer, and Gertrude created no less astonishment in Frankfort than in Cassel. Her health, moreover, gradually improved. During the two years of her stay at Frankfort, she learned to stand and walk, though not for any length of time. After she had completed her course of study, her father resumed his pilgrim's staff. He visited Vienna with Gertrude, then nine years of age—she was born on the 23rd February, 1740. On the road, however, he had an opportunity of convincing himself that Germany was not a sufficiently rich mine

to be worked by such a prodigy, and Vienna fully confirmed the experience he had gained. But to make money, to make a great deal of money, was his principal aim. He eagerly seized, therefore, the notion suggested by the British ambassador at the French Court, of going with the child to London. Aye, London was the place where people would certainly appreciate such a wonderful phenomenon, and the recommendations given him by the art-loving Englishman could not possibly fail in their object. Thus did father Schmähling start for foggy England. His expectations seemed not to be ill-founded. The reception of the two new comers was, indeed, brilliant. The ambassador's recommendations were a golden key which opened the most aristocratic houses. Every one was speaking of the wonderful child, and at length the Queen, also, who heard scarcely any other subject discussed by those around her, expressed a wish to become acquainted with the little girl. The right moment had now arrived! The golden shower could no longer fail to pour down upon father Schmähling. Unfortunately, the latter counted without his host. . . . The Queen could not bear to see anything ugly, and little Gertrude Schmähling was most decidedly repulsively ugly. The young virtuosa, moreover, when giving a performance, worked her arms in the air in such a manner that she became almost like a spider, and at the same time made the most horrible grimaces. The Queen was startled and could not be induced to receive "the ugly thing" a second time. This was, of course, a signal for all the sycophants attached to the Court: their doors were thenceforth closed to the wonderful child. The golden rain did not come, and the posture of affairs began to grow critical. Fortunately a lover of art turned up at the right moment, and interested himself for the two beings who, without him, would soon have been sorely pressed. He was not only a rich, but a practical man. He had observed that little Gertrude possessed a very agreeable voice, and, thanks to her musical talent, easily learned and retained short songs. He proposed to the father, therefore, that the latter should discontinue the fiddle, and have her instructed in singing, adding that, if he did so, he should have no need to trouble himself about the expense. It would not have been necessary to use any of the arguments adduced by the welcome Mæcenas to the effect that violin-playing was naturally unpleasant and unbecoming for a girl; that as a violinist Gertrude would always produce the most disagreeable effect, &c. The old musician did not take long to consider. On the one hand, the aristocratic houses had gradually closed their doors on him, and the gold-springs threatened soon to become entirely dried up. On the other hand, he saw beckoning to him a new future, and the almost certain prospect that all the doors which had been shut against the violinist would one day be thrown open to the singer. The new Mæcenas, too, was really in earnest, for, hardly had Schmähling agreed unconditionally to the proposed plan, ere Gertrude began taking lessons of the celebrated Paradisi. The latter had been a world-renowned singer. After retiring from the public exercise of his art on the stage, he became the most eminent singing-master in London. He was paid a magnificent price for his lessons, and had accumulated great wealth. He was magnificently paid for Gertrude Schmähling, and so she became his pupil. What she learned of him we do not know. It is possible that, in his school, she laid the foundation of her subsequent extraordinary skill, which reached such a point, that there was no living singer who could serve her as a model, and she had to imitate the roudes of celebrated flautists and violinists. Enough that she became his pupil, and that with her name the name of Signor Paradisi as well has been permanently handed down to posterity.

Nor are we acquainted with the particulars concerning the immediate results of the instruction she enjoyed. It would seem, however, that those results were not such as father Schmähling probably expected, as far at least as regards the material effect on his purse. It appears certain, that London as persistently refused to open its doors to the singer as it had done to the violinist, and that consequently gold and jewels did not fall into her lap. Papa Schmähling cared only for pecuniary success, and, as the flesh-pots of Egypt, for which he so ardently yearned, appeared, despite the new era, only very sparingly on his table, he suddenly determined to return home. In his opinion, Gertrude could not now fail to be considered a wonderful phenomenon in Germany. Remarkable perverseness of Fate. The good people of Germany

* From the *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung*.

his compatriots, took the liberty of entertaining a different opinion to that of the old musician. Schmähling proceeded at first to Cassel. But, as we know, a prophet is nowhere worth less than in his own country; this always was and always will be the case. The Seven Years' War had emptied men's strong chests. The country of Hesse especially had been drained most fearfully by the French before the battle of Rossbach, and can sing a song about the glorious traces of the Grand Nation. People limited themselves to what was absolutely necessary. Under the head of what is absolutely necessary, we must include, however, an Italian Opera, for there was still one in Cassel despite exhausted purses. But what was to be made of a singer who had fallen from the clouds on the other side the Straits of Dover, who was a native of Cassel, and could boast neither of name nor reputation? It was impossible to employ her at the Italian Opera, even though she had been pre-eminently beautiful, which was not the case. The fair Italian artists would never have allowed such an engagement, and it would not do to offend them. In a word, all the steps taken proved fruitless, and even the recommendations from England proved worthless in every instance. Nay, father Schmähling was actually unable even to obtain his daughter's appearance at a Court concert, which would at any rate have brought him in a few louis d'or. Week after week, and month after month, did he wait and exert himself in vain. At length he had no alternative left but to grasp his pilgrim's staff and once more set out upon his wanderings. In 1798 father and daughter reached Leipzig during the Easter Fair, and it was here that Gertrude's destiny as a singer was to be decided.

(To be continued.)

SIG. ARDITI'S ORCHESTRA AT COVENT GARDEN.

First Violins.—A. Burnett (leader), V. Collins, F. Ralph, A. Gibson, A. Kettenua, Max Vogel, J. B. Zerbin, Alfred Streather, F. Crosa, A. Simmons, Thaddens Wells, W. Pratt, J. W. Rendle, Ellis Roberts, W. H. Reed, A. Easton.

Second Violins.—Val Nicholson (principal), J. Earnshaw, John Kelley, H. Griesbach, J. Newsham, R. W. Buttery, T. Boatwright, F. Hackenberger, T. Browne, H. Gibson, G. Bourton, H. Morley.

Violas.—W. H. Hann (principal), S. Webb, W. Waud, T. Lawrence, W. Burnett, J. Thompson, G. Cubitt, W. Egerton.

Violoncellos.—C. Ould (principal), J. Boatwright, A. Bouman, A. Guest, E. T. Quinton, L. Snyders, L. Shepherd, J. Saunders, H. Trust.

Double Basses.—E. Ould (principal), S. Jakeway, W. Griffiths, J. P. Waud, W. J. Strugnell, W. Castell, A. Kleigl, J. Beresford, W. A. Wade, Albert Collins.

Flutes and Piccolo.—Oluf Svensden, A. Jensen. *Oboes*.—G. Horton, T. A. Smith. *Clarinets*.—Lazarus, G. Tyler. *Bassoons*.—W. B. Wotton, T. Anderson. *Horns*.—C. Harper, J. W. Standen, Preatoni, W. Hinchey. *Cornets and Trumpets*.—H. Reynolds, J. Scotts, F. A. Backwell, St. Jacques. *Trombones*.—W. Webster, John Harvey, T. Antoine. *Ophicleide*.—S. Hughes. *Tympani*.—Pheasant. *Grosse Caisse*.—Middleditch. *Side Drums*.—Austin, Orchard. *Harp*.—E. Lockwood. *Conductor*.—Arditi.

WIESBADEN (from a Correspondent).—The sixth Kurhaus Concert took place on the 17th August. Who does not know the beautiful Marble Hall, the concert hall, and banquet hall, the monuments of the days past, when roulette went round and round, and people won and lost fortunes. The indefatigable Kur-director, Herr Heyl, still administers with taste and judgment, to the gratification of his patrons. M. Saint-Saëns from Paris being here, was invited to play his fourth pianoforte concerto, which he did like a genuine composer who knows best how to give effect to his own music. He was warmly received. His well-known "Danse Macabre" and his poem symphonie, *Phaeton*, for orchestra, were played with great success. Middle Orgeni and Herr Sontheim were the vocalists, singing, as we have often heard them sing before, "Les tenors sont rares;" and Middle Orgeni will be remembered at your Royal Italian Opera. The performance of Flotow's *Maria* was marked by the debut of Middle Rolandt, young and beautiful, with a voice so sweet and sympathetic, and such faultless execution, that she took the house by storm.

Mozart.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—The following humorous poem is from the pen of the *Concertmeister*, August Müller, who died, in 1862, at Darmstadt. We give it in a free translation from the German original:—

"Mozart was a Musicus—Extraordinarius. That he was sublime and grand is well known through ev'ry land. Besides a master of his art, was clever in other things, Mozart; What else he could besides yet be, will tell you all, this litany: Mozart was a joiner good, although he used not glue nor wood; But his "fugues" were such a hit, as made the very walls to split. He was a *turner* excellent, since ev'ryone will apprehend That nothing in his works is found, which is not smooth and very round.

Mozart was a *mastersmith*, who, without trouble, could forthwith, Play with keys of every sort, that is sure, upon my word. Mozart was a *blacksmith* brave, in his works the proofs we have, For in truth it must be said: he hits the nail firm on the head. A *metal-founder* he was besides, but this profession much derides, For wanton use of too much brass he thought was fit but for an ass. As maker of an *instrument*, was Mozart really excellent, And you may for certain take, no man such "Magic Flute" could make.

As *diplomate* quite grand was he, and this we even now can see, For notes once issued by his hand are honoured yet in ev'ry land. In "*fencing*" he was also strong, and never out nor ever wrong. For his tierces and his quates were in their right places everywhere. As *hairdresser* I do believe that no one did so much achieve As Mozart when he dressed so fair a Titus for an Emperor. A *gravedigger*, 'though one excellent, was Mozart, yet before his end. Who wouldn't be proud if he became, in "Memoriam," performed his Requiem?

By such great versatility, one must declare implicitly, That Mozart was the most sublime and greatest artist of his time."

You will detect, sir, the expediency of giving immediate publicity to the foregoing, which if you fail to do, I am by no means your obedient servant and slavish admirer. I have rendered it into English from the German (or, in some sense, Teutonic) of the *Leipsic Journal*, and am, yours under consideration,

C. O.

THE THREE CHOIR FESTIVAL.

The programme of the 154th Festival of the Three Choirs of Gloucester, Hereford, and Worcester, to be held at the first-named place in the first week in September, has been issued. Although hopes were entertained a fortnight since* that Mdle Tietjens would be sufficiently recovered to fulfil her engagement as principal soprano, that hope is abandoned. Mdle Albani will take the major part of the music originally assigned to Mdle Tietjens. The Festival opens on Tuesday, the 4th of September, with full morning service at the Cathedral, on which occasion the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, who has hitherto held aloof from active participation in these Festivals, will preach the sermon on behalf of the widows and orphans. In the afternoon *Elijah* will be given; on Wednesday morning Bach's *Passion* and Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, and in the evening Mendelssohn's *St Paul* and Part I. of Haydn's *Creation*; on Thursday morning a miscellaneous selection of sacred works, including Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*, Brahms' *Requiem*, "Blessed are they," and the late Dr Wesley's anthem, "The Wilderness;" on Friday morning Handel's *Messiah*. There will be secular concerts at the Shire Hall on Tuesday and Thursday nights, and Evening Service, with band and chorus, in the nave of the Cathedral on Friday. The list of stewards includes the names of nearly two hundred noblemen and gentlemen.

HANOVER.—On the 14th August the highly-esteemed Court Kapellmeister Fischer, successor of Marschner, died at a public dinner given by a few friends in his honour on his return from a long journey. He was recounting to them in jocular manner how he had travelled from Munich to Cassel in seven hours—when, just as he was going to say "Cassel," he fell back dead. He was one of the giants of the old school, like Marschner, Spohr, Gühr, Esser, &c. The Court Theatre now, a few days before its re-opening, is without a conductor.

* They were not and could not be entertained.—C. O.

THE ITALIAN OPERAS.

(Reminiscences of 1877, from the Scrap-book of a Dilettante.)

No. 1.

ZARE THALBERG'S ZERLINA.

Fortunately, Mdle Thalberg, whose entrance was greeted with prolonged applause, did much to compensate for the deficiencies of the others. Her voice is more beautiful than ever, and has become richer and stronger since last season. Whether it has gained in flexibility and compass remains to be seen; but it was evident last night that she has been endowed by Nature with vocal gifts which, with proper cultivation, must speedily place her in the highest rank of the operatic profession. . . . Her voice is of such remarkably rich quality throughout its entire compass that it will bear any amount of cultivation, and abundantly repay it. Last night its freshness and brilliancy imparted an irresistible charm to her execution of "Batti, batti," and other portions of her rôle, and her intonation was faultless. The return of this charming young artist (now only in her nineteenth year) will enhance the attractions of the Royal Italian Opera, and her popularity was attested by the warmth of her reception.—*Globe*, May 5.

No. 2.

EMMA ALBANI'S OPHELIA.

Beyond the fact that the Ophelia of Mdle Albani becomes year after year a more finished impersonation (more poetical it could hardly be), and that, both in a vocal and dramatic sense, it may fairly take rank with her Senta, Elizabeth, and Elsa—her Wagnerian trilogy—there is nothing to add to what has already been said about it. To follow Christine Nilsson in this, one of the brightest of her creations, was no grateful task; but here success has recompensed ambition, and the Ophelia of the fair Canadian is pronounced by competent judges only second to that of the fairer (*blonder*) Swede.—*Graphic*, June 23.

No. 3.

ADELINA PATTI'S CATARINA.

L'Etoile du Nord appears to be growing in favour. . . . At any rate, the opera that used to be played once at the close of the season for the benefit of Mdme Patti, is now a more prominent feature. . . . It attracted an enormous house on Tuesday night, not a place being anywhere vacant, while the highest expectations of the audience were more than satisfied. . . . Mdme Patti was, of course, the "star" of the occasion, and never shone more brightly or with a steadier lustre. Her representation of Caterina amounted, indeed, both in a dramatic and musical sense, to one long triumph. The "Bohemienne," the prayer "Veglia dal ciel," and the important music of the last act, including the well-known and ingenious trio for voice and flutes, were all given to perfection so obvious that it was not possible to conceive anything better. As to the great artist's acting, the power of it is so well known that no word of description or of eulogy is needed.—*Daily Telegraph*, May 31.

No. 4.

ETHELKA GERSTER'S GILDA.

On Tuesday night *Rigoletto* was performed, with the new singer, Mad. Gerster, as Gilda. We are inclined to think that were Mad. Gerster to turn aside for a time from parts the prevalent characteristics of which are florid passages, more or less elaborately embellished, and devote her attention seriously to the study and practice of the plain *cantilena*, where level singing is indispensable, she would improve the quality of her middle voice, without in any way endangering the supremacy of her favourite high notes. The manner in which she sang more than one *cantabile* phrase on Tuesday night convinced us of this. As examples, we would especially point to her delivery of the melodious passage, "Quanto affetto," &c., which begins Gilda's share in the expressive duet with Rigoletto ("Veglia, O! donna, questo fiore"), and the recital of the story of her clandestine meetings with Walter Maldé, the pretended student. The charming soliloquy, "Caro nome," but for two florid *cadenzas* out of keeping with its character, would have been irreproachable.—*Graphic*, July 14.

No 5.

CHRISTINE NILSSON'S RETURN.

The palmiest days of this historic house* were suggested on Saturday, when Madame Christine Nilsson made her first appearance

* Her Majesty's Theatre.

for the season. Rank and fashion once more thronged to the Haymarket, amateurs of all classes crowded the interior, which by the way looked the picture of cheerfulness, and the rule of the evening was enthusiastic applause. In the experience of many present the occasion may have derived added zest from the fact that Madame Nilsson first trod the new stage in the part chosen for her *début* on the old. Whether this was by design or not matters little. Nothing could have been more appropriate, and all among the audience who were present when, 11 years ago, a new *prima donna* burst upon their gratified sight, must have witnessed Saturday's doings with special interest. Since she first played the Violetta of *La Traviata*, the Swedish artist has undergone no inconsiderable development as regards both the scope and character of her genius. There have been times when it seemed doubtful whether that development took precisely the right direction, but the strong good sense and quick perception of Madame Nilsson never fail in the long run to discover and correct mistakes. To these qualities the remarkable success obtained on Saturday night may in a large measure be attributed. Whatever tendency was once manifested towards an exaggerated style of acting has apparently been conquered, and Madame Nilsson now makes a careful and artistic use of the large resources accumulated by her experience and by the natural growth of her eminent talent. All the more interesting on this account was it to compare her present Violetta with that of her earliest appearance amongst us. None could have forgotten the winning gentleness and grace of the *débutante*, and none could fail to see that those qualities still exist in all their charm, united to the dramatic power of a ripened artist. The advantage is thus in favour of the present over the past, and opera-goers have thus good reason to congratulate themselves that Madame Nilsson is not only again engaged in their service, but better qualified than ever to satisfy their most exigent demands. We need not describe for the hundredth time all the incidents of an "ovation," such as the public bestow upon the prime favourites of the lyric stage. The reader may imagine all he can of the enthusiasm without much risk of going beyond the truth. Animated by so warm a greeting, the Swedish artist exerted her whole powers, both as actress and singer; and when we say that her voice was as distinguished as ever for that indefinable quality which makes it so eminently *human*, and therefore sympathetic, it may be assumed that the effect she produced was immense. In point of simple fact, Madame Nilsson has not often so thoroughly conquered the enthusiastic approval of her audience by means so legitimate. No matter whether it was the brilliant music of the first act, the passionate strains of the second, or the pathetic melodies of the third, in each and all she sang like a great artist. Higher praise we cannot give; praise less high would fail in justice. We might dwell long upon the dramatic characteristics of Madame Nilsson's Violetta, but, as they are perfectly well known, to do so would be superfluous. Let us say, however—what, indeed, we have already indicated—that the assumption was one of exceptional finish as well as breadth of outline. While made a sufficiently striking figure in the earlier scenes, Violetta never appeared overdrawn, so that a perfect consistency was established between the gay reveller of the "Libiamo" and the girl whose love, in the last scene, conquers the assurance of coming death and conjures up a vision of happy life. This may be an idealised Violetta; but, if any one makes the fact a ground of objection, the answer is that no other would be tolerated, even if it were not the business of the stage, as a branch of art, to improve upon the realities of common, and, too often, repellent life. How much the audience admired the representation, and applauded the artist's *tours de force*, we need not stop to tell. Enough that Madame Nilsson re-established herself in the highest favour of the public.—*Daily Telegraph*, May 7.

COPENHAGEN.

(From a Correspondent.)

Uncommon musical activity has reigned here lately. On his way back from more northern latitudes, M. Henri Wieniawski gave two concerts. He was followed by an entire concert company, headed by Mad. Trebelli, who gave six concerts in the course of a week, at Tivoli. The company included Mad. Trebelli, Mdle Valleria, Sig. Talbo, and Herr Behrens. On leaving here, they will proceed to Sweden and Norway, first visiting, however, Helsingør, famous as being the place where Hamlet was buried—at least, so antiquaries assert—and where the celebrated organist Dietrich Buxtehude, a son of Johann Buxtehude, and the immediate predecessor of Johann Sebastian Bach, was born about 1635. Dietrich Buxtehude died in 1707 at Lübeck. He was greatly indebted as an organist to the two Dutch organists, Reinick Schweling, of Deventer, and Scheidemann, his pupil. Reinick, or Reinecke, was nearly a hundred at the time of his decease.

Adelina Patti.

The Marquise de Caux has taken proceedings for annulling her marriage, on the ground that the priest who officiated at Clapham was not provided with a special licence to solemnize marriages, from the Archbishop, but was simply delegated by the parish of St Philippe de Roule to give the nuptial benediction. Other informalities also are to be disclosed. Her petition states that she discovered shortly after the marriage that her husband's only object was to profit by her earnings, and that he never occupied any other attitude towards her than that of an *impresario*, seeking to make the most money possible out of her talent. She repeats complaints of violence, and urges that the judicial separation was accorded to her husband without her being allowed an opportunity of substantiating her charges.—*Times' Paris Correspondence, Aug. 24.*

ST GEORGE'S HALL, LIVERPOOL.

Programme of Organ Recitals by Mr W. T. Best.

THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 23rd:—

Triumphal March	...	...	Moscheles.
Andante Cantabile	...	...	Omer Giraud.
Prelude and Fugue, B flat major	...	...	Bach.
Fantasia on an old English Psalm Melody	...	...	W. T. Best.
Air, "Love in her eyes sits playing"	...	...	Handel.
Overture, <i>Gemma di Vergy</i>	...	...	Donizetti.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, AUGUST 25th:—

Toccata and Fugue, C major	...	...	Bach.
Pastorale	...	...	Paul Trillat.
Sarabande, <i>Cinq-Mars</i>	...	...	C. Gounod.
Marcia Eroica and Finale	...	...	W. T. Best.
Adagio, from the Fourth Symphony	...	...	Beethoven.
Offertoire, sur l'Hymne, "O Filii" (Pour le jour de Pâques)	...	...	C. Collins.

EISTEDDFOD AT CARNARVON.—The Welsh National Eisteddfod was opened at Carnarvon on Tuesday. In place of the ordinary temporary pavilion, a large iron structure for the permanent use of the town has been erected at an outlay of £7,000. The proceedings were prefaced by a Bardic meeting at Carnarvon Castle. At its close, the Mayor (Mr Pugh), president of the day, was escorted by a procession to the pavilion. In his opening remarks, the President alluded to the value of these national gatherings as developing the latent talent of Wales, and encouraging a love for literature and music. He trusted that the other National Institution recently brought into prominence, the University College for Wales, would be successful in obtaining Government aid. The chief feature of the programme was a choral competition for 100 guineas, awarded to the Carnarvon Choral Union, the Waenawr Choir taking a second prize of 20 guineas. The Carnarvon Amateur string band won the prize, and their leader, Mr. Howell Williams, a medal for violin. Mr D. Jones, Llandoverly, took the prize for musical composition, Miss Rees, of Neath, and Miss Williams, of Llanlyfyn, prizes for vocalisation. Professor Macfarren, who, with Dr Rogers, organist of Bangor Cathedral, was musical adjudicator, spoke very highly of the ability displayed by the various competitors. In the evening there was a concert, at which Mdmes Patey, Edith Wynne, Mary Davies, and Marian Williams, Signor Foli, Eos Morlais, J. Sauvage, and Dr. Frost, assisted. Unfavourable weather militated against the success of the Eisteddfod on Wednesday, under Lord Penrhyn's presidency. His Lordship was glad that at gatherings productive of such beneficial results to the community, there was no longer a desire to praise and uphold everything Welsh. He had protested against such a tone when occupying the chair at Carnarvon sixteen years ago; and it was satisfactory now to find all joining heartily in objects calculated to promote culture and raise moral and social position. The chief choral prize, 100 guineas, subscribed by Welsh quarrymen for choirs from the quarrying districts, fell through, owing to the absence of competitors: and the chief literary honour for an essay on the state of society in Wales shared the like fate. Mr Bryant, of Corwen, won the prize bass. Mr Pritchard, of Bangor, won the forty guinea pianoforte given by Messrs Brinsmead, for amateur pianists, Miss Jenny Davis, Llangollen, taking second prize, and Miss Cox, Threapwood Vicarage, third. The oration was delivered by Professor Mackenna Hughes. Mdme Edith Wynne, Mdme Patey, Signor Foli, and Professor Macfarren were again actively present.

Touching Eels.

"I'm an eel, I'm an eel, I'm a spitchooked eel," &c.
(Popular Tune.)

"Heal me of that Eel, Ilkwhelk!"

(Old Play.)

And yet were I to choose my lot,
And say I'd be an eel,
Would that be happiness or not?
Should I contented feel?

My aching heart, my puzzled brain,
Cannot support this mental strain.



Garret or Jarret.

(To Danophylin.)

DEAR DANOPHYLIN,—I am perplexed: Is it Jarret or Garret, either or both, who acts Mephisto to Dishley Peters' Fisto (Fausto)? I am resolved to know. You among men and Christian managers—you alone among mortals who have risen to immortality (*bei Khiva*), can decide—unless it be the great "J. H. M." himself. Your predecessor—or rather your revered T. T.'s predecessor, the late incomparable Shirley Brooks—engendered a quintain, beginning:—

There was an old fellow called Jarret,
Who kept (somebody) up in a garret (*sic*).

I forget the rest; but does not this sound like the prediction of a postaction? Answer, dishly (or rather *frankly**), and believe me, yours in sincerity,
Reeds.

P. S.—I saw Shaver Silver yesterday, reading Dr Donne. I tapped him on the shoulder (it was in St Paul's belfry). "You are," I said "at the beginning of Elegy XVIII." "Well?"—he replied, inquiringly—"it's the last—Come, Madame, come." To which I answered, with some disdain, "Off with that girdle!" Here the conversation dropped; but, strange enough, I saw Arthur Sullivan, M.D., two hours later, on the Thames Embankment. He was looking for the roof which is to cover the new grand "National Opera" (conductor, Sir Michael Costa), because, without that roof, his *Marie Stuart*, and Christine as Marie, can hardly be given by "Lady Day."† Not finding the roof, he dined at the Garrick, met Sambourne, and slept soundly.

Catch that eel, or have the under-gardener disembowelled and quartered‡. If that eel is not speedily scotched (alliteration intended) instead of Boodell it will be Bodeill.§ Your companions said all they had to say (and that was trenchant) in "Chapter I." Now they do nothing but walk about the garden, and stare at a trimmer. This does not look well for the sequel—for which you will naturally seek well (*not new*). Woodman, skin that eel!—

Skin that eel
Or you'll never be weel.

Buy a new horse, and trot back to Khiva, with "Fig"—you may then make some new diskhivaries.¶

* Registered.

† I don't mean Earl Day's lady, but the 25th of March, 1878.

‡ Double meaning. Registered.

§ Registered.

¶ Registered.

RICHARD WAGNER TESTIMONIAL.

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A TESTIMONIAL of Regard in commemoration of his Visit to England will be presented to Herr WAGNER. The Committee appeal to all his English friends and admirers to join in it. All contributions will be duly acknowledged in the *Times*. Cheques to be made out to the Honorary Treasurer, Hon. RICHARD GROSVENOR, 12, Orme Square, W., and crossed "The Wagner Testimonial Fund—Messrs Drummond."

Portraits.

No. 9.

*mentiri nescio; librum,
Si malus est, neque laudare*



I know not how to lie; if a book (picture) is bad I cannot praise it, *Ne Sartor ultra, &c.*

BARKER TESTIMONIAL FUND.

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THE above Committee having learned with deep regret that Mr CHARLES S. BARKER, Inventor of the Pneumatic Action, is, at 70 years of age, in reduced circumstances, without means of support, are desirous of providing him with an annuity for his declining years, and beg to solicit contributions in furtherance of this deserving case. Owing to the Franco-Prussian war, Mr BARKER had to seek an asylum in this country after many years' residence abroad, when, unfortunately, it was too late in life to turn to profitable account those researches which had cost him so many years of patient and assiduous labour, resulting in the successful application of pneumatic action to the touch of organs, without which modern instruments and modern performances on them would be impossible, and more recently in the electro-pneumatic system, besides other minor but invaluable details to organ mechanism. As it is of urgent necessity that immediate steps be taken with a view to save him from actual want, the Committee put forth this appeal. Contributions should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, F. DAVISON, Esq., 24, Fitzroy Square, London, W., as early as possible, the Committee being anxious to close the Subscription List before the 29th September next, by which time, it is hoped, a sufficient amount will have been obtained to enable them to carry out their object.

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A Friend, £1 1s.; Bere, C., £10 10s.; Best, W. T., £5 5s.; Bevington & Sons, £1 1s.; Bishop & Son, £3 3s.; Bridge, J. F. (Mus. Doc.), £1 1s.; Bryceson Bros & Morton, £2 2s.; Carr, George, £1 1s.; Cavaille-Coll, £10; Cocks & Co., £3 3s.; Davison, J. W., £1 1s.; Davison, W. D., £1 1s.; Donnelly, Rev. N., £1; Elvey, Sir G. J. (Mus. Doc.), 10s. 6d.; Fincham & Son, £1 1s.; Forster & Andrews, £5 5s.; Gray & Davison, £10 10s.; Hill & Sons, £5 5s.; Hopkins, E. J., £2 2s.; Hopwood, J. T., £5; Jardine, F. W., £2 2s.; Kittell, F. J., £1 1s.; Lewis, T. C. & Co., £10 10s.; Monk, E. G. (Mus. Doc.), £1 1s.; Novello & Co., £3 3s.; Ouseley, Rev. Sir F. A. G. (M.A., Mus. Doc.), £5; Rea, William, £1 1s.; Smart, Henry, £2 2s.; Spark, William (Mus. Doc.), £1 1s.; Stainer, John (M.A., Mus. Doc.), £2 2s.; Steggall, Charles (Mus. Doc.), £2 2s.; Stewart, Sir R. P. (Mus. Doc.), £1 1s.; Sullivan, Arthur (Mus. Doc.), £2 2s.; Tuckerman (Dr), £1 1s.; Turpin, E. H., £1 1s.; Walker, Messrs J. W. and Sons, £2 2s.; Willis, Henry, £2 2s.

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The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1877.

Mad. Florence Rice Ricca.



WE promised last week to lay before our readers the letter addressed by "Mad. Ricca" to the Editor of the *Adrian Times*, in which our musical critics as a body are so handsomely treated, and such civil things are said about managers, about the English and Italians, about artists in general and Mad. Scalchi in particular. Here it is (the italics are our own):—

"MDME RICCA'S DEBUT IN LONDON.

"To the Editor of the *Adrian (Mich.) Times*.

"So many false reports have reached me, coming from the American press, and particularly from Michigan, about my recent debut in opera at Covent Garden, that I feel, in simple justice to myself, I ought to send to my old home a truthful account of that event. I write to you personally, because the *Times* has ever been friendly to me. I know that I have many kind friends in Adrian who are interested in me, knowing how I love the art, and having faith in my success. It is to them and to you, therefore, that I address myself. You all, doubtless, heard of my success in Malta, when I sang to critical Italian audiences during four months. A complimentary benefit was offered me, to take place immediately after Easter; and I wrote to Mr Gye, the director of the Covent

Garden Opera, asking if I might remain in Malta until the 7th of April. His answer was a telegram that I must be in London by the 1st of April, to sing Leonora in *La Favorita*. Therefore I left Malta at a day's notice, and at a great sacrifice came by land at double the expense, and arrived here on the 29th of March, in perfect health and voice. Imagine, then, my surprise and indignation when Mr Gye gave the part of Leonora to Mme Scalchi, an artist who had been eight years at Covent Garden, and is a favourite with the public. The reason alleged for the change was that he (Gye) did not wish to present two new artists to the public on the same evening (meaning Gayarre, the great tenor, and myself). Of course, I believed him then, but I know now that, as he did not need me this year, he would not pay me, nor continue the liberal terms of his five years' contract with me. He intended to sacrifice me by making me follow a great artist in the same part, and give me no sort of a chance. The *Favorita* was a success, thanks to the tenor.

"After it had been given twice, and I had been in London two weeks, I saw my name announced to sing the part on the 16th of April. No rehearsal was granted me, and nothing was done by either the manager or the press to help me in this trying ordeal. I had not a dozen friends in all that great assembly to greet and encourage me. Yet, from the moment I appeared, I was warmly cheered and welcomed. *I knew that the critics were there in full force to tear me to pieces, first of all because I was an American and a 'debutante,' and because the favour and praise of the English press had not been bought up. That species of blackmail is carried on here, as elsewhere, I find, much to my sorrow.** I had splendid support in the artists. The second act was immensely successful, the duet with the King being rapturously applauded and re-demanded, and we were obliged to repeat it; also, after my aria, 'O mio Fernando,' in the third act. The last act did not go so well, for I was excessively nervous, and my emotions paralyzed my efforts; but I went through without faltering, and was called before the curtain at the close. Was this failure? Was it not a favourable success for a first appearance in the first theatre in the world, and with a great orchestra that I had never sung with, and without a rehearsal?"

"But the English and the Italians will not let an American succeed if intrigue and cruel jealousies can prevent it. Mme Scalchi said to an artist of Covent Garden: 'I will not have Mme Ricca succeed. I will have no rivals here. Whoever applauds her is my enemy.' (!) The Italians do not relish the Americans coming to take their place on the lyric stage, and sing in their language. No one has any idea of the jealousy that exists among artists.

A *début* at Covent Garden is a great ordeal for an old artist. What must it have been to a *débutante*, who had only four months' experience on a small stage, to be put on that immense stage, with a strange orchestra of eighty players, with new artists, without a rehearsal, without being certain of the dramatic part of the business, to rush out into a blaze of lights, and sing and act a rôle as important as that of Leonora? The miracle is that I did not die of stage fright, or was not 'struck dumb,'—as one of the home papers reported.

"The critics (so called) were very unkind and very untruthful—at least some of them; and Mr Gye, only too glad to get rid of paying me, wriggled out of his contract, saying that my voice was not powerful enough for his theatre. It is so absurd that I could laugh over such a poor excuse if I did not rebel at the injustice. 'My voice was never stronger or clearer in my life, and I have been entirely free from cold or sore throat since last year. I have many projects and plans for the coming fall and winter, and I intend to show these people what I can do before I quit this cold country. I had the honour of singing at the Earl of Darnley's mansion last week, and met with great success. Pardon my long letter. I wanted so to give you a true and minute account of my experience, and my *début* in opera in England."

"London, June 20."

Comment on such a letter as the foregoing would be superfluous. Never having heard Mad. Ricca, or read a single article in any paper concerning her, *pro* or *con*, we are unable to offer any opinion as to her merits; but whatever these may be, they do not entitle her to insult a body of gentlemen of whom she knows absolutely nothing. Here we have, in another and more

* Who may have been the lady's informant? Mad. Ricca was not in the Haymarket, where nothing but *truth* is spoken, even concerning critics, but in the Coventgardenmarket—*bucolic paradise!*



offensive form, the impertinent reflection of Herr Anton Rubinstein—"En effet, c'est l'argent—c'est toujours l'argent!"

[Herr Rubinstein prefers *Or* to *Argent*—"Higher Development." J. P.]

MAD. FLORENCE RICCA.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—Permit me to say a few words in reference to an article copied from an American newspaper, in which it is averred that I accuse the English critics of being "blackmailers." The article in question was copied from a private letter, and was not, therefore, intended for the public. So far, I may be acquitted of any intent to cast any imputation upon the gentlemen connected with the English press, in the estimate of the American people or any considerable portion of them.

With respect to the charge itself, the word "blackmail" is, I know, an ugly one. I beg to say, in explanation of it, that it was based upon some unfortunate experiences which I had on the Continent, and through whose occurrence I was misled by some events which took place soon after my arrival in London.

I herewith most expressly disclaim any knowledge of "blackmailing" by the English press, and have further to say that I was labouring under a misapprehension when the charge was originally made.

FLORENCE RICCA.

London, Aug. 22, 1877.

[This letter came too late for immediate consideration. It will keep, however.—D. P.]

Herr Rubinstein on England.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—It is not so very long ago that Herr Rubinstein is said to have said to Dr Hans von Bülow—"The English people are the least musical of any." Some flippant wag, on being told of this, observed, "the remark was justified by the fact that, in the course of two seasons (1876 and 1877), Herr Rubinstein had earned from £10,000 to £12,000 of English money." Supposing this to be true, it has made no change whatever in the Moldavo-Bessarabian artist's opinion of England, English amateurs, and English musicians—that is, if we may credit a gushing account of "An Evening with Rubinstein," copied by the *New York Music*

Trade Review from another American periodical. The article itself, though too "high falutin" for ordinary English tastes, I should recommend you, as a *cumini sector*, to put by for the attentive perusal of your readers on a future occasion. Meanwhile, I would merely call attention to a particular part of it. The after dinner conversation turned on the relative merits of English and foreign orchestral players. Herr Rubinstein—the authoress of this epileptic table-narrative informs us—"admitted a 'certain power of tone in English players—that is, in English bands, so largely made up of German and other foreigners'—but denied the existence of 'any individuality, delicacy, or intelligence in the interpretation of the leading violins.' * * * 'Sluggish and heavy,' they did not leap out to meet him, as at the great Conservatoires. 'Et il me faut ça—il me faut ça. En effet, c'est l'argent—c'est toujours l'argent'—or, in other words, the one aim of art in this country is not art, but money; and a man labours so incessantly, no matter how, to accumulate wealth, that he has not the time, even had he the requisites, to become a great artist."

This is cool from a *virtuoso* who has mastered a certain repertory which, compared in extent and variety with that of Hans von Bülow, Charles Hallé, Clara Schumann, or Aratella Goddard, is as a bunch of grapes to an entire vineyard, and who at each of his visits to London, since 1857, with the addition, from time to time, of sundry compositions from his own pen (not invariably of the choicest), has given the identical series of pieces over and over again—one and all familiar before he had perplexed our tip-

toed, squeamish lady amateurs, our shrinking, pusillanimous, ostrich-like, head-hiding professors, with his erratic method of interpreting them. "Oh"—it will be said, by the Duchess of Fitzbattlease—"the dear! he plays everything without book." So much the worse. Though, for upwards of twenty years, he has toyed with the same string of pieces, the book would now and then be of as much service to him as the sun to the steel clasps and buttons with which M. Ferulus, the pedagogue, in Paul de Kock's novel, diverts the company's attention from his threadbare suit. If only as an occasional "refresher," moreover, it would be acceptable. I am of opinion that all or any of the pianists I have cited would play by memory twenty compositions to Herr Rubinstein's one,—instead, for example, of three or four sonatas of Beethoven, *all* Beethoven; three or four preludes and fugues of Bach, *all* Bach; three or four pieces of Mendelssohn, *all* Mendelssohn; three or four pieces of Schumann, *all* Schumann. With the Variations, in D minor, of Handel, those unhappy little improvisations, the *Gigue* in G major, and *Rondo* in A minor of Mozart, and the eternal *Moto continuo* of Weber, one gets almost surfeited, bearing in mind the vast number of compositions by the same masters which Herr Rubinstein never attempts, any more than he attempts (why not?) the Op. 106 of Beethoven.

One would imagine, by the way, to hear the talk about his performance of Mozart's *rondo*, that such a thing as a *pianissimo* was never before heard upon the instrument. This he *does* play charmingly, though not more charmingly than I have heard it played by others. With his rendering of the *Gigue* I am less satisfied. It is quick—quicker certainly than Mozart ever dreamed of. Could Handel have heard the *finale* to his D minor variations, he would have taken off his wig, scratched his bare poll, and cried "Vat is dat?" In Weber's always played faster-than-possible *Moto continuo*, one may picture Herr Rubinstein with Etna in one hand, Vesuvius in another, and Hecla, or Oakeekikopki on his head. *Delirium tremens!* To the *Dii minores* (demigods in their way), such as Dussek, Clementi, Woelfl, Hummel, Sterndale Bennett, &c., it cannot be expected that a *virtuoso* of Herr Rubinstein's stature would condescend; but it might be supposed that Schubert had written more than one sonata worthy his attention. Chopin's Sonata in B flat minor, despite its vaunted Funeral March, and delicate, simpering, boudoir-perfumed episode, is, on the whole, an inferior work to its companion in C minor, neither of them, however, presenting even a tolerable idea of the genuine sonata form, despite the vapouring rhodomontade of Friar Liszt. Then, is there only the "Cat's Fugue" (G minor) in Scarlatti's "Lessons?" Is there not one in F minor, far more beautiful?—and a third, in D minor, equally spirited? Like all sensational pianists, Herr Rubinstein shoots heaps of Chopin, who stands in peril, with his morbidly elegant sentimentality, of becoming something of an infliction. But wherefore so shy of Bilow-Beethoven-Raff?

I always like to hear this fiery *virtuoso* interpret his own music, though I don't greatly care to hear it interpreted by others. When Herr Rubinstein is in tranquil mood, his playing is absolutely beyond reproach; but when, to employ a homely expression, he "lets loose," and gives the reins to his Pegasus, despite his almost incredible mastery of whip and spur, that famous steed becomes unmanageable, and treats him as Phaeton was treated by the horses of Apollo. Seeing that, according to Herr Rubinstein, the one aim of art in this country is not art, but money, it may be asked why so fierce and uncompromising a champion should, by his visits, make certain epochs historical among us. Of course he does not come for money. Oh no! He comes for art. It is only the poor devils of orchestral players, many of whom, in the time that it takes Herr Rubinstein—with the smallest conceivable stock in trade, and rarely a new article—to gain £12,000, scarcely gain half as many shillings, that think of money and leave art to take care of itself! Being at the most but tepid art-lovers, they will not "leap out to meet" Herr Rubinstein; though, if their salaries were raised, they might probably make a venture, at the risk of breaking their necks. And since the Moldavo-Bessarabian pianist appears to regard "leaping out" as a genuine test of that reverence for art (*vice* money) which he pronounces non-existent in this country, it might be worth his while to double the salary of every orchestral performer who, on his ascending the steps of the platform, would "leap out to meet him." "Leapers" by the score

would be the result, which though it might temporarily incommode Herr Rubinstein, notwithstanding "*Il me faut ça*" ("*en effet*"), would certainly amuse the audience. The advertisement of the day might be thus worded:—"Concerto in G major, composed and performed by Herr Rubinstein—previous to which the conductor (Herr Manns), and members



of the orchestra will 'leap out' to meet him." The "very nodding" ("very nodding" is good) "Chinaman on the mantelpiece," to which the greatly moved authoress of *An Evening with Rubinstein* alludes, would be affected. There is a lovely peroration, by the way, to this palpitating effusion:—

"And the last I saw of him was the deep red of a monster cigar, gleaming through the

darkness, as he said, 'Good Night!'

So that Herr Rubinstein had been metamorphosed into "a monster cigar," and, like a Jack-o'-lantern, disappeared, with a faint laugh.

AN ENGLISH MUSICIAN.

Clarendon Hotel, Birmingham, Aug. 21.

[We can insert no other letters from "An English Musician," unless he favours us with his name. We are not answerable for his opinions, or for his manner of expressing them; and three letters, addressed to him at the Clarendon Hotel, remain unanswered. D. P.]

Episode.



At the Bee and Bottle.

SIR FLAMBOROUGH HEAD (alone—perusing score of G major concerto).—By Jove! This is odd. I wonder if they'll leap out to meet him. Humph! (*meditates over score*). I wonder if they—

A peal. Ghost of Barrator-Deforsor.



GHOST OF BARRATOR-DEFORSOR.—They went! (*a pause*)—They'll—(*sepulchrally*) They'll leap at extra pay. (*Vanishes.*) SIR FLAMBOROUGH HEAD (*shivering*).—By Jove! It's cold. I'll go and ask Arthur. (*Exit, uncomfortably, at postern.*)

Episodes on Change.



DR QUINCE.—Well, have you heard?
 DR SHIPPING.—Oh yes!
 DR QUINCE.—Who coached him?
 DR SHIPPING.—Crammed him?
 DR QUINCE.—Coached him.
 DR SHIPPING.—The Lieutenant-Colonel.

[Eccent to Bulgarian.]

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

HERR WILHELM TAUBERT, of Berlin, has just published, at Schlesinger's, his Opus 189—a concerto in A major, for pianoforte, with orchestral accompaniment. This gentleman is almost as prolific as Joachim Raff, the "Beethoven" of Dr Hans von Bülow.

THE performances of Mr Carl Rosa's company in Dublin appear to be more and more in vogue. As usual everywhere, among the most successful are Benedict's *Lily of Killarney* and Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*. A new singer, Miss Emma Beasley (soprano), has made "her first appearance on any stage" in the leading part of Balfe's *Siege of Rochelle*. She was received with great favour, and the local press speaks highly of her. The operas played during the week which ends to-day were to be *The Flying Dutchman*, *Maritana*, *Robin Hood* (Macfarren), *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Faust* (with a new tenor), and again (to-night) *The Flying Dutchman*. *The Irish Times* has the following:

"Mr Rosa is a staunch believer in the musical talents of the Irish. He has already several Dublin vocalists in his company—notably, Messrs Ludwig and Crotty—and next season will probably have a young Dublin lady amongst his *prime donne*."

Mr Ludwig has distinguished himself as Vanderdecken, in Wagner's opera, Mr Crotty as Michel in the *Siege of Rochelle*—both of which parts belonged to Mr Santley, when that famous baritone was a member of the company.

WAGNER, finishing his *Parceval* at Bayreuth, with another opera in contemplation, is working with his mind at ease. An enthusiastic patron is reported to have paid the deficit of last year's festival.—(From a suspected source.)

MOLLE FERNANDA TEDESCA, the young and highly-promising American violinist who was in England last winter (and whom we hope at some future time to hear in England), has gone to Heiden, in Switzerland, on a visit to some relations. She returns at the end of next month to Paris, to continue her studies under her distinguished professor, M. Henri Vieuxtemps, with whom, we understand, she is making genuine progress.

AT the last classical concert in the Alexandra Palace, under the direction of Mr H. Weist Hill, a young pianist—Miss Florence Sanders—gave a brilliant performance of Beethoven's Concerto in E flat, which was received with more than ordinary favour. The young lady is a highly promising pupil of Mr W. H. Holmes.—*Tatler*.

BUDA-PESTH.—The National Theater re-opened with *Aida*, the principal characters being sustained by Mad. Thérèse Singer, and Herr August Perotti, the latter from the Stadttheater, Leipsic.

DARMSTADT.—The Court Theatre, being shut up for three months in consequence of the mourning for the death of the Grand Duke, will re-open on the 6th September under the direction of Capellmeister Seydlmayer.

AMERICAN DÉBUTANTES.

(From the "New York Music Trade Review," Aug. 3.)



We publish in to-day's issue a letter sent by Mrs Florence Rice-Knox to an American newspaper, which contains statements worth consideration. If Mrs Knox, or, better, Mdme Ricca, is right, she is the most injured artist that ever lived; insulted by Mr Gye, insulted by the London critics, insulted even by her friends, who—clapped their hands at her *début*, when there was no earthly reason for doing so. But, if Mdme Ricca exaggerates, she deserves blame and punishment. As far as we are concerned, we hardly believe a word of the whole statement the American lady ventured to volunteer, and we are bold enough to give our reasons for disbelieving her assertions. Mdme Ricca speaks of her success in Malta as of an event in musical history. A success in Malta does not mean anything, and a young, handsome woman can easily gain it there, even if her artistic merits are somewhat inferior, because the officers of the British garrison form the principal part of the operatic audiences; and those gentlemen are very lenient towards operatic attempts of fair *débutantes*. A success in Malta would be of about the same value as a success in Adrian, Michigan, to the inhabitants of which place Mdme Ricca's letter is directed. But the letter is sent to an American newspaper for publication, and, consequently, belongs to the world. If the letter were a communication to a private person, we should refrain from entering into this affair of a lady; the communication is made by an "artist" to an "Editor," and Mdme Ricca has to bear the consequences of her, at least, imprudent step. Mdme Ricca was engaged by Mr Gye, of the London Covent Garden Theatre, sang Leonora in *La Favorita*, and the contract between her and her London manager was cancelled, or, as the technical term reads, she was "protested" by her manager. Mdme Ricca accuses Mr Gye, Mdme Scalchi, and the London critics; she dreams of a premeditated conspiracy against her, but confesses, in her own statement that the last act did not go so well on account of nervousness. Whoever knows Donizetti's *Favorita* must own that this last act is the climax of the *prima donna's* rôle, and a singer who has failed in this act has made an undeniable *fiasco*. People in Adrian, Michigan, might not know that exactly, but opera-goers in New York, London, and Paris do. Besides, we lack comprehension of a lady singer who gets nervous at the end of her *début*. We know of many *débutantes*, who appeared trembling during the first scene, and mustered courage so far that their talents were developed and shown to their best advantage while the opera proceeded, but we cannot understand how a success of three acts (such as Mdme Ricca claims for herself) can intimidate a *débutante* so that the climax of her rôle falls flat. It is absurd to say such nonsense, but still more absurd to presume that other people will believe it. Mdme Ricca, it is clear, made what we should call a *fiasco d'estime*, and is either too proud to own it, or does not know her own capabilities. Why should Gye intrigue against her? He is glad enough to get cheap artists, and would be still more glad in keeping those artists, their success having been assured. But even cheap artists are too expensive for an *impresario*, after their *fiasco* has been established through the entire press, and very likely through the verdict of the audience, except the friends of the *débutante*. As to Mdme Scalchi, it is rather cool on the part of Mdme Ricca to accuse an accomplished artist, with a long-established reputation, of being jealous of her, a mere beginner. If Mdme Ricca were really better than Mdme Scalchi, no intrigues would have helped the latter lady. A real success can be prevented; the public of a metropolis is not to be so easily guided or misguided in this regard. Mdme Ricca charges the English press with black-mail—a serious charge, which ought to be resented by every honest journalist throughout the world. There is no doubt that some of the London critics will sell their favourable opinions, as some critics do everywhere.* But this transaction deserves by no means the charge of black-mail.† As long as Mdme Ricca cannot prove that her "*début*" was unfavourably criticised in the papers on account of her not seeing the writers, she has made a grave accusation without being able to sustain it. Among the thirty or forty London musical critics there are surely honest men enough who would scorn any monetary offer made to them by an operatic "*débutante*," and are not

* It would have been only fair to those who don't "sell their favourable opinions" to specify those who do.—D. B.

† In the name of honesty what else is it?—D. B.

likely to sell their frank opinion for a couple of pounds, through which a singer, with a very limited salary, might try to bribe them.*

Mdme Ricca accuses the English and Italians as two nations which will prevent the rise of American talent. Shall we prove, with one single instance, that Mdme Ricca is entirely wrong? We name Emma Albani. This lady, being an American, is one of the leading stars in London, and in her own country the public showed her the cold shoulder. When Mdme Ricca, in the last paragraph of her letter, declares that the critics were untruthful, and Mr Gye's assertion, that her voice was not powerful enough for the stage at Covent Garden, an absurdity, she does not say anything new. It is just the same thing hundreds of singers have said before her, but not one of those singers ever made a success in all their lives. Take the worst possible singer in the world, and he will tell you just the very words Mdme Ricca has uttered. If the American lady would study seriously, instead of sending letters to American editors, she would act very wisely, and, maybe, avoid in future time any necessity of further correspondence in the same tenor. Otherwise, we are afraid Mdme Ricca will have the chance of writing some more letters, in which she will be obliged to accuse managers, critics, and singers of other cities. The result, however, might be more injurious for the plaintiff than for the defendants.



The letter Mdme Ricca has sent is that of a spoiled, naughty child, and we hardly had thought it worth while paying any attention to it, if we did not consider it as a specimen of a quantity of letters which American operatic *débütantes* send over to this country. It is true, not all of these letters find their way into newspaper columns; but often enough we read of successes American ladies made on operatic stages in Europe, and, we regret to say, only in one case out of fifty the report has the truth on its side. Only last winter we had the best proof of

falsified European criticisms. Fact is that Mdme Emma Abbott never made a success on any operatic stage in Europe, and when she came over here, her manager, the renowned De Vivo, tried to explain to the public the reasons why the lady had left the European stage. Religious feelings had to lend their aid. Mdme Abbott had refused to sing *La Traviata*, on account of moral objections, and the managers in Paris and London, for the sake of these moral objections, had to renounce her services. Glorious idea! Well, we have heard the *Daughter of the Regiment*, and we could easily understand that any manager might willingly renounce the services of Mdme Abbott, and that, if not moral objections, artistic ability would prevent the lady from singing *La Traviata*. Christine Nilson and Clara Louise Kellogg have both the *Traviata* on their *répertoire*, and neither of these renowned artists had ever the slightest stain on their reputation. Mdme Abbott wanted the assistance of the church-people here; therefore, the moral objections to the *Dame aux Camélias*. Mdme Abbott might last for one or more seasons in concerts in America; for the operatic stage she is to be considered dead, as well in America as in Europe.

We have some renowned American *prime donne*, Albani, Kellogg, Cary; America can boast of very valuable operatic singers, who will build up their career in an honourable way; but when all the American girls and women who study for the stage with European teachers believe that a study of two or three years makes them great, secures them a position, when puffs will do the rest, they are decidedly mistaken. Let Wartel, Lamperti, Manuel Garcia, Mdme Marchesi, San Giovanni, Pierini, and all the other singing-masters of reputation take the money of these ladies; they might teach them a good deal, but, where the real talent is lacking, the best teacher in the world will not help them to a reputation which managers, critics, or the public will recognise. There are too many American singers in the market. Everybody wants to be a "star," and in most cases darkness takes the place of shining splendour. Genius makes the operatic star, Talent, the good singer; if talent pretends to be genius, the *fiasco* is unavoidable, and leads good artists to ruin. *Suum cuique.*

An opera-comique by M. Codes, entitled *Le Chevalier de Lartignac*, (libretto by M. Dias) has been produced at Dieppe. Another, music by Deffès, libretto by MM. de Leuven and Adenis, has been given with success at Rouen. It is entitled *La Trompette de Chamboran*.

* This is remarkably considerate on the part of our New York contemporary! Call us at once the "Forty Thieves."—D. P.

DR CROFT.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—Among your list of notable events connected with music, for August, you have neglected to mention the death of Dr Croft, on the 14th—an event surely noteworthy by all English musicians. Yours truly,

E. P.
[Although the list was not ours, "E. P." is heartily thanked.—D. P.]

WAIFS.

ALEXANDER PALACE.—The Promenade Concerts at this popular resort continue to be well attended on the Thursday and Saturday evenings, and the various performances by the fine body of instrumentalists under the direction of their admirable conductor, Mr Weist Hill (Alfred Mellon's successor as our English Costa), are highly appreciated. The vocal portion of the entertainment is also well worthy notice. On Thursday evening, the 16th inst., the singers were Mdme Ziméri, her first appearance at the Alexandra Palace, and Mr Wilford Morgan. Mdme Ziméri who gave the Page's song from the *Huguenots*, and Donizetti's cavatina, "O luce di quest' anima," was warmly received and called after each performance. Mr Wilford Morgan, a general favourite here, sang Meyerbeer's "Fishermiden," and the "Bay of Biscay," being unanimously summoned back to the platform after the latter.

Mr and Mrs J. B. Jewson and family are now in Ramsgate. Dr Hans von Bülow has been drinking the waters at Creuznach. M. and Mad. Lemmens (Sherrington) were at Paris a short time since.

L'Africaine will be put in rehearsal at the Grand Opera at the end of the month.

Mdme Ethelka Gardini-Gerster will remain at Pesth till the autumn season.

Herr Wilhelmj is slowly recovering from his severe illness, at his villa at Mosbach.

Herr Theodor Wachtel contemplates fixing his permanent residence in Berlin.

Mad. Marie Cabel is gradually recovering her speech and the use of the paralyzed arm.

Herr Franz Nachbaur is engaged to sing at Rome, next spring, the part of Lohengrin in Italian.

Only 16,000 marks have, up to this time, been collected towards the Spohr Monument at Cassel.

A catalogue of Richard Wagner's Literary Works has been published by E. Kastner, in Vienna.

Mdlle Aimée, with a small operatic, or rather operettatic, company, has left for the United States.

Mdlle Teresa Singer, the Paris Aida at the Opéra Italien, has been performing in Verdi's great work at Pesth.

Mdlle Richard, a new member of the Paris Grand Opera company, will make her first appearance in *La Favorite*.

Mr Handel Gear has returned from his visit to Germany, and will join his family next week in the Isle of Thanet.

Herr Richard Wagner has returned to "Wahnfried," Bayreuth. He is working at *Parcival*, and still another opera.

A new three-act comic opera, *La Lectrice de l'Infante*, by M. Serpette, is in preparation at the Bouffes Parisiens.

Before being created a Russian noble, Anton Rubinstein had received a patent of nobility from the King of Denmark.

Herr G. Beck, the bass barytone, is about to marry Mdlle Maria von Hamm, "leading juvenile lady" at the Töplitz Theatre.

The Cluny Theatre, in Paris, has in preparation a scientific play, by M. and Mad. Louis Figuier, entitled *Six parties du Monde*.

It is proposed to found in Rome a school for female students of music, sculpture, and painting, on the model of the Art School at Milan.

Herr Georg Unger, the Siegfried of the Bayreuth Festival, will shortly become a member of the company at the Leipsic Stadt-theater.

The King of Holland has conferred the order of the Oaken Crown on MM. Émile Bourgeois and Edouard Broustel, pianists and composers.

A new play, entitled *England in the days of Charles II.* (founded on *Peveril of the Peak*, by W. G. Wills, is to be produced shortly at Drury Lane Theatre.

Offenbach, in association with MM. Calvot and Duru, has finished a new comic opera entitled *Mademoiselle Favart*, the leading part in which is destined for Mdlle Girard.

The Campobello-Sinico Concert Company will give two grand promenade concerts on the Covent Garden system, towards the end of October, at the Exhibition Palace, Dublin.

Mad. Mathilde Ziméri, the attractive young vocalist, who met with so favourable a reception at the Alexandra Palace last week, is to sing again at the concert to be given this day (Saturday).

Herr von Flotow's new opera, *Die Musikanten*, the libretto of which is founded (as we have said already) on an episode in the life of Mozart, will be produced in Italian, at Turin, next October.

The proceedings of the third session of the Musical Association for the investigation and discussion of subjects connected with the art and science of music, have been published by Messrs Chappell.

Liszt will shortly leave Weimar for a prolonged stay at Rome. Since the death of Cardinal Antonelli, the relations between his Holiness and the musical Abbate have re-assumed somewhat of their former cordiality.

M. Victor Massé, who has been in a bad state of health for a considerable time, is taking a six months' holiday. It is not announced who temporarily replaces him as Professor of Composition at the Conservatory.

M. Edouard Philippe, business manager of the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*, formerly director of *Les Enfants de Paris*, has been named "Officier d'Académie" for his ten years' services rendered to Orpheonic institutions of France.

The Conservatory has this year furnished seven young artists to the operatic stage of Paris—M. Jourdan, Mde Castillon, Mdles Carol and Mendez, to the Opéra-Comique; M. Talazac, to the Théâtre-Lyrique; M. Sellier and Mdle Richard to the Grand-Opéra.

Herr Josef Gungl, at present in Hamburgh, and favourably known as military *Capellmeister*, has entered the lists as operatic composer, and set the libretto of *Rothkippchen* (*Little Red Riding Hood*). Some of the music, introduced at his concerts, was favourably received.

We hear that Mr Francis Howell has completed a new cantata entitled *The Song of the Months*, the libretto by Sarah Phœbe Howell. The copyright has been purchased by Messrs John Boosey & Co. Songs from the work have been appearing in the *Musical World* during the last seven months.

The Meyerbeer Prize has been awarded by the Royal Academy of Prussia to Herr Arnold Krug, teacher in Stern's Conservatory, Berlin. In 1869, the same gentleman carried off the Mozart Foundation Prize, at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and in 1870 the Prize of the "Musikalisches Gartenlaube," Leipzig.

In this day's *Figaro*, "Cherubino" writes:—"Mr and Mde Lemmens-Sherrington have been staying in Paris, where the lady has, I am told, been engaged for a series of concerts at the Exhibition Palace at the Trocadéro next year. At one time there was a feeling against British-born artists in Paris, but now, since the success of Mde Patey and Mde Arabella Goddard in the French capital, more liberal ideas have prevailed, and the artistic *entente cordiale* between the two nations bids fair to be further strengthened.

Miss Furtado's death leaves a distinct gap in the ranks of our comedienness—I would use an English word if I could, but there is not one. I saw her first appearance in *Leion* at the Royalty, a piece which, curiously enough, introduced to the public at least four distinguished actresses of the present day, and I ventured then to predict for her a brilliant future. My prediction, I am glad to know, was more than verified; and, had Miss Furtado lived, she would probably have become the best actress of her day in a certain line of parts.—*Tatler*.

Several papers have asserted that Mde Patti was not asked to sing this year at the Royal Concerts. Mde Patti was not only asked to sing, but her name was announced in the official list. Some few days before the concert for which Mde Patti was engaged she was compelled, by the advice of her medical attendants, to decline the honour intended her, and Mdle Gerster was, I believe, substituted. It has further been stated that Mde Patti telegraphed to America her acceptance of an engagement with M. Strakosch. That gentleman is at present in this country, and the engagement is still under Mde Patti's consideration.—*The Theatre*.

A curious theatrical case has been before the Vienna law courts. Some time ago Herr Loewe, a theatrical critic of the *Neue Freie Presse*, received a letter from Fräulein Olma, enclosing a bank-note for a hundred florins, and requesting him to speak favourably of her performance. He sent back the bank-note, with a letter saying that he and his colleagues were guided in their criticism by the merits of artists and not by money considerations. Fräulein Olma apologised, and explained that she had acted upon the advice of the leader of the *claque*. Thereupon Herr Loewe commenced criminal proceedings against the leader of the *claque*. The defence set up was that Fräulein Olma had mistaken the name, and that the defendant had referred her to a nephew of his, named Löwy, an advertisement canvasser. But, unfortunately for this defence, he had given the address of the critic of the *Neue Freie Presse*, and,

moreover, Fräulein Olma had received a visit from the nephew, and had given him a note for a hundred florins. The court sentenced defendant to three months' imprisonment.—*The Theatre*.

Mde Liebhart's concert scheme in connection with the Flower and Fruit Show at the Agricultural Hall, and announced in the *Figaro* of July 28th, is taking definite proportions. Sir Julius Benedict, Messrs Kingsbury, G. B. Allen, and Ganz will conduct; there will be an orchestra of eighty, and four military bands; while the solo vocalists already engaged are Mesdames Edith Wynne, Liebhart, Anna Bishop (who will make her first appearance since her return from the Antipodes), Osborne Williams, Enriquez, and Sterling, Misses Giulia Warwick, Frances Brooke, Sinclair, Rhoda Temple, Derby and Elton, Messrs Lloyd, Cummings, Perren, Pearson, Wilford Morgan, Vernon Rigby, Maybrick, Wadmore, Thurley Beale, and Lewis Thomas. In addition to this imposing list of singers there have been engaged, as solo instrumentalists, Misses Albrecht, Brouil, and Frances Thomas, Messrs Ganz, Tito Mattei, Cheshire, Watson, Pettit, White, Young, Hutchins, Sanders, and T. Harper. The concerts will begin next Tuesday, August 28th, and for the first Saturday concert, on September 1, Miss Giulia Warwick has been retained.—*Figaro*.

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